

5-POINT 3-12 WRITER'S RUBRIC

WORD CHOICE

5 Words convey the intended message in a precise, interesting, and natural way. The words are powerful and engaging.

- A. Words are **specific** and **accurate**. It is easy to understand just what the writer means.
- B. **Striking words and phrases** often catch the reader's eye and linger in the reader's mind.
- C. Language and phrasing are **natural, effective, and appropriate** for the audience.
- D. **Lively verbs** add energy while **specific nouns and modifiers** add depth.
- E. Choices in language **enhance** the **meaning** and **clarify** understanding.
- F. **Precision** is obvious. The writer has taken care to put just the right word or phrase in just the right spot.

3 The language is functional, even if it lacks much energy. It is easy to figure out the writer's meaning on a general level.

- A. Words are adequate and correct in a general sense, and they support the meaning by not getting in the way.
- B. Familiar words and phrases communicate but rarely capture the reader's imagination.
- C. Attempts at colorful language show a willingness to stretch and grow but sometimes reach beyond the audience (thesaurus overload!).
- D. Despite a few successes, the writing is marked by passive verbs, everyday nouns, and mundane modifiers.
- E. The words and phrases are functional with only one or two fine moments.
- F. The words may be refined in a couple of places, but the language looks more like the first thing that popped into the writer's mind.

1 The writer demonstrates a limited vocabulary or has not searched for words to convey specific meaning.

- A. Words are so nonspecific and distracting that only a very limited meaning comes through.
- B. Problems with language leave the reader wondering. Many of the words just don't work in this piece.
- C. Audience has not been considered. Language is used incorrectly making the message secondary to the misfires with the words.
- D. Limited vocabulary and/or misused parts of speech seriously impair understanding.
- E. Words and phrases are so unimaginative and lifeless that they detract from the meaning.
- F. Jargon or clichés distract or mislead. Redundancy may distract the reader.